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Canadian pros invade Grizzly land

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Recommended Citation

University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations, "Canadian pros invade Grizzly land" (1972). *University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present*. 22446.
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CANADIAN PROS
INVADE GRIZZLY LAND

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MISSOULA--

With professional football becoming more and more popular in Canada, pro teams north of the border are expanding their talent hunt in the U.S. and four Grizzlies from the University of Montana heeded the call this year.

The Canadian Football League got two offensive linemen, Willie Postler and John Lugviel, from the 1971 squad and two defensive men, tackle Larry Miller from the 1970 team and defensive back Roy Robinson from the 1969 team.

Postler, a 6-5, 250 lb. offensive guard has signed with the Vancouver, B.C. Lions and is the only Canadian of the four. The Vancouver native was also the only one of the four to be drafted by the National Football League as well. He was picked in the ninth round by the Houston Oilers.

Recently, Lugviel and Miller were offered, but have not yet signed contracts to play for the Edmonton Eskimos. Miller, 5-9 and 250 lbs., played defensive tackle on the 1969 and 1970 championship teams. He was All-American his senior year. Lugviel, 6-3 and 243 lbs., started in 1970 and last year and was the team punter both years with about a 36-yard average.

Both Miller and Lugviel transferred to UM from Grays Harbor Community College in Washington. Lugviel is from Longview, Wash., and Miller is from Martinez, Calif. Robinson, 5-10, 180 lbs., graduated from Glasgow High School, and was a sprinter and hurdler for the track team as well. He has been signed by the Ottawa team.

Only one Grizzly from the 1971 team was drafted by and agreed to play with an NFL team. Steve Okoniewski, offensive tackle, was drafted in the third round by the Atlanta Falcons and is negotiating now for a contract.

CANADIAN PROS INVADE GRIZZLY LAND--2

The Canadian Football League has ruled that next year its teams may allow more U.S. players on their rosters. Last year each of the nine CFL teams could allow only 14 U.S. players on their rosters, but this year 16 may join each team. Last year all the starting CFL quarterbacks, head coaches and most of the assistants were Americans. Very little football is played in Canadian high schools or colleges and the CFL has had to look to the U. S. for much of its talent.

And the CFL, with increased interest and money, has been able to attract some very good American players. All-Americans Joe Theismann from Notre Dame, Steve Smead from Penn State and Jim Stillwagon from Ohio State, for example, are all playing in Canada now.

An American player going to Canada to play must first orient himself to the slightly different rules. A Canadian football field is 10 yards longer and 11 2/3 yards wider than an American field and the end zones are 25 yards deep, instead of 10.

Canadians play with 12 men (an extra back) on their teams and have only three downs to get a first down instead of four.

Canadian rules would allow someone like Lugviel, who may get the punting assignment for Edmonton, to become a regular scorer for the first time in his career. Punters and field goal kickers can score points, called singles, by simply kicking the ball through the deep end zone. Because of that rule, Canadian games rarely end in ties.

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